

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 996

By Cohen

A RESOLUTION relative to the Tennessee Lottery's participation in the state's AMBER ALERT program.

WHEREAS, Tennessee's AMBER ALERT is a statewide program, administrated by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, that has formed and nurtured a partnership among the state's law enforcement community, media broadcasting services, and the public for the purpose of locating abducted children; and

WHEREAS, modeled on the nationwide AMBER Plan, Tennessee's AMBER ALERT program provides the public with immediate and up-to-date information about a child abduction via widespread media broadcasts and solicits the public's help in the safe and swift return of the child; and

WHEREAS, in fact, the public immediately becomes the eyes and ears of law enforcement through the AMBER ALERT program, and they often provide valuable assistance in the search for an abducted child; and

WHEREAS, under the AMBER ALERT concept, the state's law enforcement community employs the assistance of local media outlets to interrupt normal programming and request public assistance in locating children who have just been abducted; and

WHEREAS, emergency bulletins and photographs of the missing child are relayed from law enforcement agencies to the media through the Emergency Alert System and Locator Poster E-Mail System; and

WHEREAS, seeking to further the worthy goals of this outstanding program that facilitates cooperation among state entities, the media, and the public, many State Lotteries are now participating in the AMBER ALERT network in their respective states; and

WHEREAS, when an AMBER ALERT is issued, the participating State Lottery immediately sends an electronic text message to thousands of Lottery retailers statewide through the same on-line terminals that dispense Lottery tickets; and

WHEREAS, the retailers are then required to print copies of the AMBER ALERT message, which includes information about the victim, suspect, and the vehicle used in the abduction, and post such copies at prominent locations in the retail outlet; and

WHEREAS, additional copies of the AMBER ALERT message can easily be printed from the on-line lottery ticket terminal for distribution to customers; and

WHEREAS, in many states, the display on the back of the on-line Lottery ticket terminal, which faces customers, is also utilized to alert the public that an AMBER ALERT has been issued, with such display urging customers to ask the retailer for details; and

WHEREAS, State Lotteries are in an especially advantageous position to assist law enforcement agencies in the search for an abducted child, because the large majority of Lottery retail outlets are convenience stores and groceries, which have high customer traffic on any given day, and can thus help disseminate AMBER ALERT messages in an efficient and expeditious manner, thus increasing the likelihood that an abducted child will be rescued quickly and safely; and

WHEREAS, the participation by State Lotteries in their respective state AMBER ALERT networks has proven to be highly successful in disseminating AMBER ALERT messages to the public in a more expeditious manner and through a greater number of outlets; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Education Lottery Corporation should move with all due speed to join our state's AMBER ALERT network; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that in the interest of locating and rescuing abducted children quickly and safely, the Tennessee Education Lottery Corporation shall formulate and implement a plan, in cooperation with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, for the Tennessee Lottery's participation in the state's AMBER ALERT program via on-line Lottery ticket terminals and all other appropriate media and technology at the Corporation's disposal.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Tennessee Education Lottery Corporation shall report its progress in implementing the state's AMBER ALERT network within the framework of the Tennessee Lottery to the General Assembly no later than February 1, 2005.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an enrolled copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Education Lottery Corporation.